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Leg. Counsel

Press Item for the DCI

Date: 29 Oct

Item: No. 18

Ref: No.

Sen From bel

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ROGERS TOLD THE COMMITTEE TODAY HE THOUGHT CONGRESS HAD BEEN AWARE OF U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS IN LAOS. HE RULED OUT ANY CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY TOWARD THE LAOTIAN GOVERNMENT.

ROGERS SPOKE TO NEWSMEN AFTER FULBRIGHT CHARGED THAT THE U.S. HAD BECOME INVOLVED IN A CLANDESTINE WAR IN LAOS WITHOUT AUTHORITY FROM CONGRESS.

FOLLOWING THE CLOSED MEETING, THE SECRETARY OF STATE EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT FULBRIGHT'S CHARGES.

"I THOUGHT CONGRESS WAS FAMILIAR WITH WHAT WE ARE DOING THERE...WE THOUGHT CONGRESS UNDERSTOOD IT," HE SAID.

HE SAID THE "OPERATIONS" IN LAOS WERE BEGUN BY THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION AND CONTINUED BY BOTH THE JOHNSON AND NIXON ADMINISTRATIONS.

ASKED IF THE ADMINISTRATION WAS PLANNING TO MAKE CHANGES, ROGERS SAID, "I DON'T THINK THERE'S GOING TO BE A CHANGE IN POLICY, NOT NOW."

ROGERS SAID ONLY 45,000 AMERICANS WERE IN LAOS AND THERE WERE "NO GROUND FORCES" THERE.

Comment

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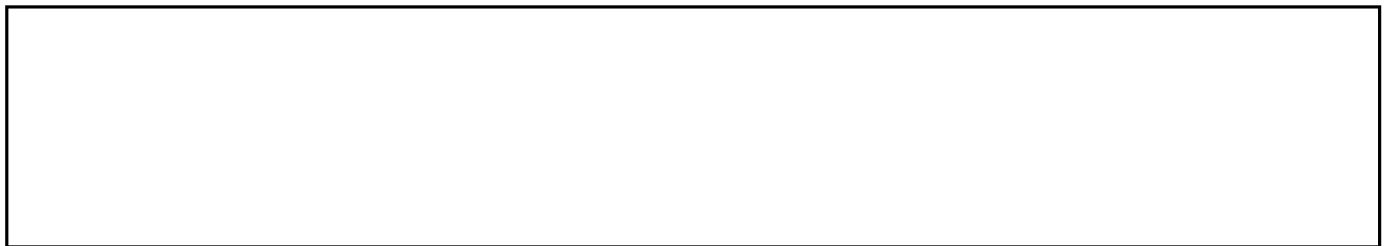
OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

Tuesday - 28 October 1969

1. (Secret - JMM) Accompanied the Director who testified before the Subcommittee on U.S. Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad of Senate Foreign Relations Committee, regarding our involvement in Laos. A transcript is available in OLC.

2. (Unclassified - GLC) Jay Sourwine, Senate Internal Security Subcommittee staff, called with a question about the Stockholm Conference on Vietnam. He said a press release which was given by the International Liaison Committee on 12 October discussed this conference. Sourwine is interested in knowing whether any Americans participated in this conference.

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5. (Unclassified - GLC) Checked with Al Westphal, House Foreign Affairs Committee staff, on the status of amendments to the Foreign Service Retirement Act to provide the benefits of the Daniels/McGee bill to Foreign Service retirees. Westphal advised that the Committee is preoccupied with the Foreign Aid bill and has no immediate plans to act on this legislation. He did indicate, however, that there is a good possibility that the Daniels/McGee amendments will be included in legislation which will also make other amendments to the Foreign Service Retirement Act.

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6. (Confidential - JGO) Met with Mr. John R. Blandford, Chief Counsel, House Armed Services Committee, and discussed the introduction of the proposed amendments to the Agency's retirement act. Mr. Blandford indicated that the pressing business of the Chairman and the members at the present time are quite burdensome and could result in delay pending action on the amendments by the Senate Committee. He advised that he would take a further look at the matter during the day after receipt of the Agency's letter to the Speaker of the House formally transmitting the legislation for consideration by the Committee.

I met later in the day with Mr. Frank Slatinshek, Assistant Chief Counsel, who told me that he had gone over the legislative package with Mr. Blandford after receipt of the letter to the Speaker. The bill will be put in for introduction by the Chairman hopefully later in the week.

7. (Secret - JGO) Briefed Mr. John R. Blandford, Chief Counsel, House Armed Services Committee, on the following items:

- a. Soviet low altitude defense measures;
- b. Soviet SS-9 test;
- c. Soviet leadership differences.

8. (Secret - JGO) Met with Mr. Robert Michaels, House Appropriations Committee staff, and finalized arrangements for the Director's meeting with the CIA Subcommittee on Wednesday, 29 October.

9. (Secret - JGO) Talked to Mr. Walter Pincus, on the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, after the Director's appearance before the Committee. Mr. Pincus advised that the Committee does not plan to request Agency witnesses for the hearings on Thailand scheduled to begin on Monday, 10 November.

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11. (Secret - JGO) Met with Mr. Arthur Kuhl, Chief Clerk, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, after the Director's appearance and reconfirmed the existing arrangements for handling the transcript of the Director's meeting with the Symington Subcommittee. The transcript will be delivered to the Committee at the beginning of business each day and will be retained in the main Committee room to be picked up at the end of the day and returned to the Agency for safekeeping. This procedure will continue for as many days as may be required for review by the Committee members. Thereafter the transcript will be held for safekeeping by the Agency, subject to call by the Chairman.

12. (Secret - JGO) Met with Mr. William Woodruff, Counsel, Senate Appropriations Committee, who told me he had briefed Senator Richard Russell (D., Ga.) on [redacted] of 15 October. He recommends that at an opportune time the Director bring up the matter and discuss the project further with Senator Russell.

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[redacted]
JOHN M. MAURY
Legislative Counsel

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cc:
ER
O/DDCI

[redacted]
Mr. Houston
Mr. Goodwin
DDI
DDS
DDS&T
OPPB
EA/DDP

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